



PRESS RELEASE

Librarian of Virginia Nolan T. Yelich to Retire

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For Immediate Release

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(Richmond, Va.) Librarian of Virginia Nolan T. Yelich is retiring on June 30 after nearly 39 years in state government. He began his state service in 1968 as director of public services for the Earl Gregg Swem Library at the College of William and Mary and joined the staff of the Virginia State Library (as it was then known) on June 1, 1973. In 1995 Yelich was appointed state librarian by Governor George Allen. In 1996 the *Code of Virginia* was changed to give the Library Board appointment authority for the state librarian. In 1998 the General Assembly enacted legislation changing the title of the state librarian to Librarian of Virginia.

Yelich served as director of administrative services and as deputy director of the Library of Virginia and twice served as acting state librarian. "One of the highlights of my career will always be the honor and privilege of being associated with the staff of the Library of Virginia," said Yelich. "A talented staff and world-renowned archival and printed collections have made my job a pleasure."

During his tenure, the Library has increased its support from both the public and private sectors. Yelich oversaw the construction of the \$43 million Library of Virginia building at 800 East Broad Street and the move from the Library's former home in Capitol Square to the Broad Street location. The new Library of Virginia facility opened to the public in January 1997. In 1999 the Library also opened a new \$8 million State Records Center in Henrico County. Both buildings continue to attract attention from other states seeking to build similar well-designed facilities. On his watch the Library became one of metropolitan Richmond's ten most-visited attractions and an anchor for the revitalization of Broad Street.

He guided the expansion of the Library's outreach efforts, including the exhibitions and educational programs, and was an early advocate for what has become the Library's signature event, the annual Literary Awards Celebration. The annual literary awards competition honors outstanding Virginia authors and books about Virginia in the areas of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. "Among his strengths is the ability to put together a talented team and empower them to work together to anticipate and solve problems," said Dr. Charles W. Sydnor Jr., chairman of the Library Board. "The Library of Virginia became an internationally recognized research library during his years at the Library," said Andrew H. McCutcheon, former member of the Library of Virginia Foundation and Library Board.

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Yelich and the Library Board were the 2002 recipients of a Virginia Coalition for Open Government's Freedom of Information Award for ensuring public access to the papers of former Governor Jim Gilmore. He won the American Library Association's 2004 John Phillip Immroth Memorial Award for Intellectual Freedom in 2004, also for his stand in pursuing the records of the Gilmore administration for the state archives of Virginia. In 2006 Yelich was honored with a Centennial Award from his alma mater, the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The Centennial Awards recognize both national and local leaders in the library and information profession.

Yelich has served as president of the Virginia School Boards Association, chairman of the Williamsburg/James City County School Board, president of the Virginia Library Association, member of the American Library Association and the National School Board Association delegations to China, member of the Board of Trustees of the Art Museum of Western Virginia, and chairman of the Public Library Association's White House Conference Planning Committee.

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